

Chapter 5: Plan Implementation

Future Staffing Requirements

The Detroit River IWR currently has one employee, the Refuge Manager. The staff of the Shiawassee NWR provided management support for the former Wyandotte NWR since shortly after Refuge establishment in 1961. Since passage of the Detroit River legislation, managers from Shiawassee NWR and the Ottawa NWR in northern Ohio have served as acting Refuge managers. The staffs of Shiawassee and Ottawa national wildlife refuges consist of about 10 positions each: Refuge manager, Refuge operations specialists, an administrative technician, a wildlife biologist, a biological science technician, park rangers, and maintenance workers.



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To achieve the objectives of this plan, the Midwest Region of the Service has requested additional funding from Congress to establish a Refuge office, including staff and equipment, in the vicinity of the Refuge boundary. The budget proposal includes hiring five essential staff members, leasing office space, and purchasing vehicles and small boats. This request must compete with other national budget priorities and start-up funding is not assured in any given year. The following chart depicts a potential Refuge staff that could be in place by the expiration of this plan in 2018. This organization chart is similar to that of other national wildlife refuges in the Midwest.

Figure 11: Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge Organizational Chart, 2018



Funding

Funding for operations on the Detroit River IWR, or the former Wyandotte NWR, has not been specifically identified in past budgets. Rather, the operation and maintenance support has been drawn from the budget of Shiawassee NWR.

In 2002, the acting Refuge manager detailed from Shiawassee NWR worked nearly full-time on issues related to the Detroit River while retaining some responsibilities at his primary station. The Service hired a Refuge manager for the Detroit River IWR in 2004.

The cost of remediation and restoration of Grassy Island, and possible cleanup on lands proposed for acquisition in the future, is expected to far exceed any routine Refuge funding request. The work will require special appropriations from Congress or an alternative funding source.

Refuge Operating Needs

The following paragraphs provide a brief description of some priority Refuge projects identified for possible funding in the Service's Refuge Operating Needs System.

Conduct Biological Survey of Wildlife and Fish Use and Habitat Diversity: Standard surveys of fish and wildlife use and habitat diversity of the lower Detroit River area are needed to obtain accurate documentation of flora and fauna in the area of the Refuge. Documentation based on various surveys will assist in habitat improvement planning to enhance wildlife use and diversity. This documentation will also be incorporated into various outreach materials to provide environmental education to the public. Surveys will be coordinated with Michigan DNR personnel, U.S. Geological Survey biologists, Service fisheries biologists, and local environmental organizations.



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Establish Partnerships with Canada, other Agencies, Governments, and NGOs: The establishment of a bi-national refuge, and the sheer number of communities and interests along the U.S. and Canadian shoreline, will necessitate involvement with a host of governments, agencies, organizations, and recreational groups. Interaction with these parties will be required to share information, resolve problems,

develop cooperative efforts, and manage species and habitats. Coordination will involve research activities, routine surveys, and public outreach and education. These efforts will require attendance at various meetings and conferences both in the U.S. and Canada.

Develop Interpretive Displays, Kiosks, and Brochures: The newly established Refuge will provide outreach to the public through the use of interpretive kiosks, Refuge brochures, and displays for use at events, in schools, at conferences, etc. The information will focus on the Refuge, the lower Detroit River ecosystem, partnerships, recreational opportunities, and area history. The brochures will include a map of the lower Detroit River showing islands, marshes, and shorelines on the Canadian shore as well as the U.S. portions of the Refuge.

Install Entrance Signs and Post Boundary Signs: Place boundary signs on islands and shorelines of lands within the Refuge. Entrance signs will be placed at access points to Refuge lands, such as at boat landings and parking lots that access the Refuge or nearby parks. In partnership with Canada, standardized signs should be developed for use throughout the Refuge area, including Canadian and U.S. shorelines. Signs should have a designation to indicate Canadian or U.S. portions of the Refuge. These signs will increase public awareness of the Refuge and National Wildlife Refuge System, and generate support for conservation of the habitats of the Refuge.

Partnership Opportunities

Successful partnerships will be the key element for the future of the Refuge. We will actively seek to develop partnerships with additional public and private groups as staff and funding increases.

Current partnerships of non-profit groups and governments support a wide variety of conservation, environmental education and habitat restoration initiatives within the authorized boundary of the Refuge. The Service has been involved in many of these programs including the Greater Detroit American Heritage River Initiative, the Downriver Linked Greenways Initiative, the bi-national Conservation Vision for the Lower Detroit River Ecosystem and programs of the Friends of Detroit River and Detroit Audubon. Future staff of the Refuge will be involved in a tremendous number of citizen and agency-led conservation programs.



Glaucous Gull. USFWS

Please see Chapter 4 for more discussion of future partnership opportunities with local organizations as well as options for working with Canadian partners.

Step-down Management Plans

The CCP will serve as the primary guiding document for the future of the Detroit River IWR. However, several supplemental or step-down plans will be necessary within a few years to provide specific and technical guidance on Refuge operations. A habitat management practices plan and public use plan will be drafted as part of the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study for Grassy Island. An inventory and monitoring of habitat and populations plan will be written to detail the monitoring specified in objectives 7.1 and 7.2. A visitor services plan will be prepared prior to the opening of a visitor center or other major public facilities. In addition, a cultural resources step-down plan will be written to support Objective 6.2.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring is critical to successful implementation of this plan. Monitoring is necessary to evaluate the progress toward objectives and to determine if conditions are changing.

Accomplishment of the objectives described in this CCP will be evaluated as part of normal Service procedures of station visits and supervisory evaluations. The public will be informed about the activities of the Refuge staff through periodic newsletters that will be mailed to all persons on the Refuge mailing list and published on the Refuge's website. The availability of newsletters or progress reports will be announced through news releases to the media.

Plan Amendment and Revision

This CCP and its objectives will be examined at least every 5 years to determine if any modifications are necessary to meet changing conditions. Public notice, and an opportunity for public comment, will be provided if circumstances require any substantial modification of the CCP.

